

APPENDIX B

Environmental Trip Report

Dinkey Creek Reservoir

ENVIRONMENTAL TRIP REPORT. DINKEY CREEK RESERVOIR

INTRODUCTION

A team of environmental specialists completed an initial field trip to the potential Dinkey Creek Reservoir site on May 29, 2002. The field trip was the first task in the environmental study of several potential surface storage options identified for initial review during the Upper San Joaquin River Basin Storage Investigation. For initial consideration, the environmental review focused mainly on construction and potential upstream impacts associated with surface storage sites. The site visit provided an opportunity to conduct preliminary reconnaissance of existing resources at the various locations for the following resource areas: terrestrial biology; aquatic biology and water quality; recreation; cultural resources, and land use.

This appendix includes a brief overview of the resource specialists' observations, trip logs prepared by team members, photographs taken during the field trip, and maps used to identify and review existing resources. Environmental team view of the Dinkey Creek Reservoir site was made remotely from airplane. Observations are concomitant with this viewing limitation.

SUMMARY OF FIELD OBSERVATIONS

This option would involve constructing a new dam on Dinkey Creek, which is a tributary to the North Fork of the Kings River. The new dam site and reservoir would be situated mainly on public lands managed by the Sierra National Forest. This area is a popular recreation destination and includes numerous developed recreation facilities as described below. The area also includes a heliport, a ranger station, a sawmill, and paved and unpaved roads. The town of Dinkey Creek is located just upstream.

Botany

- This area is a rather remote and pristine western slope forest biotic community and consists of mid-elevation Sierra Nevadan mixed coniferous forest.
- Dinkey Creek is a large stream with high current flows.
- Mountain meadows, chaparral, rock outcroppings are present within the area.
- Highly varied habitats are present that would be affected.
- Possible presence of special status species.
- Would almost certainly affect wetlands and riparian habitat.

Wildlife

- This area appears to be an important area for summer deer range.

- The area is remote, there is a low level of existing human intrusion, a natural stream, and limited access.
- Loss of deer summer range and habitat fragmentation are likely with implementation of the management measure.

Aquatic Biology/Water Quality

- Much of the reach of Dinky Creek appears to be steep with bedrock-controlled channel and sparse riparian vegetation, but alluvial sections with riparian vegetation were also noted.
- Dinkey Creek is a popular trout fishing destination.
- Need information on fish species in the stream.
- Construction of a reservoir would replace a stream fishery with a lake fishery.
- Reservoir would likely affect downstream water temperatures with possible adverse effects on fisheries.
- Inundation of abandoned mines, if any are present, could result in water quality degradation.

Recreation

- The reservoir would inundate a major recreation area which includes three recreation camps, numerous (potentially hundreds) of recreation residences, campgrounds, day use areas, trails and roads which provide access to other recreation areas.
- The reservoir would also displace a variety of dispersed users such as fisherman, hikers and campers.

Cultural Resources

- This area is within the coniferous forest zone. There is a moderate probability of prehistoric archaeological sites, including hunting and fishing camps.
- Historic sites are likely, associated with mining, logging, recreation and other activities.

Land Use

- Ranchettes and other private homes are abundant in this popular recreation area.
- Private residences and roads, public lands, and timber reserves may be located in the areas of inundation.

| Field Trip Log - Botany | | |
|-------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Trip Log Number: | S9 | Project No.: 8004094 |
| Dates: | May 29, 2002 | |
| Site Name: | Dinkey Creek Dam | |
| Location: | Dinkey Creek, tributary to the Kings River | |
| Prepared By: | Jeff Glazner/Barry Anderson/David Stevens | |
| Date: | June 3, 2002 | |

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Weather Conditions: | Hot and dry |
| Areas Covered (attach map with notations) | |
| Attachments | |
| Photo Log | Yes |
| Photos | Yes |
| Topographic Map(s) | No |

Field Observations:

Existing Facilities:

None.

Existing Environmental Features as Appropriate to Discipline (hydrology; aquatic-water quality; terrestrial—plants; wildlife; recreation; cultural resources; land use; aesthetic)

This area is a rather remote and pristine western slope forest biotic community and consists of mid-elevation Sierra Nevadan mixed coniferous forest. Dinkey Creek is a large stream with high current flows and supports riparian habitat. Mountain meadows, chaparral, rock outcroppings are present within the area. Dominated by mixed conifer forest, with some chaparral. Rock outcrops are habitat for some southern Sierra Nevada special status species. Seeps and springs, especially around outcrops are likely.

Need for additional (engineering/hydrological, or other) information on measures

- Geology maps
- Spillway elevation
- Location of diversion structures and tunnel
- Location of power tunnels and generators
- Locations of new work pads, roads, and other construction areas
- Location of realigned existing roads
- Location of work pads, access roads, and other construction areas

Additional data needs (within each specific discipline)

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- CNDDDB report
 - CNPS report
 - Ceres report
 - Field surveys for wetlands and special status species and habitats
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| Field Trip Log - Wildlife | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------|
| Trip Log Number: | S9 | Project No.: 8004094 |
| Dates: | May 29, 2002 | |
| Site Name: | Dinkey Creek Dam | |
| Location: | Dinkey Creek, tributary to the Kings River | |
| Prepared By: | Dave Stevens, Stephanie Murphy | |
| Date: | June 5, 2002 | |
| Weather Conditions: | Hot and dry | |
| Areas Covered (attach map with notations) | | |
| Attachments | | |
| Photo Log | | |
| Photos | | |
| Topographic Map(s) | | |

Field Observations:

Existing Facilities:

Proposed concrete faced rockfill dam.

Existing Environmental Features as Appropriate to Discipline (hydrology; aquatic-water quality; terrestrial—plants; wildlife; recreation; cultural resources; land use; aesthetic)

This area is a rather remote and pristine western slope forest biotic community and consists of mid-elevation Sierra Nevadan mixed coniferous forest. Dinkey Creek is a large stream with high current flows. Mountain meadows, chaparral, rock outcroppings are present within the area. This area was viewed from the air and appears to be an important area for summer deer range. There are several constraints with this area, it is remote, low level of existing human intrusion, natural stream, limited access, loss of deer summer range, and habitat fragmentation.

Need for additional (engineering/hydrological, or other) information on measures

- Hydrologic models, dam, inundation zones
- Potential project features in addition to dam, size and location, etc.

Additional data needs (within each specific discipline)

-
- a. Need to coordinate with resource agency biologists and agency files on known distribution of sensitive species for this area.
 - b. Further studies and field visits will be necessary to determine the extent of wildlife impacts that may occur due to this alternative.
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Field Trip Log – Fish and Water Quality

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|-------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Trip Log Number: | S9 | Project No.: 8004094 |
| Dates: | May 29, 2002 | |
| Site Name: | Dinkey Creek Dam | |
| Location: | Dinkey Creek, tributary to the Kings River | |
| Prepared By: | Philip Unger | |
| Date: | June 10, 2002 | |

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Weather Conditions: | Hot and dry |
| Areas Covered (attach map with notations) | Dinkey Creek and vicinity |
| Attachments | |
| Photo Log | No |
| Photos | No |
| Topographic Map(s) | Yes |

Field Observations:

Existing Facilities:

Dinkey Creek is a tributary to the North Fork of the Kings River. The new dam site and reservoir would be situated mainly on public lands managed by the Sierra National Forest.

Existing Environmental Features as Appropriate to Discipline (hydrology; aquatic-water quality; terrestrial—plants; wildlife; recreation; cultural resources; land use; aesthetic)

Much of the project-area reach of Dinky Creek appears to be steep with a bedrock controlled channel and sparse riparian vegetation. However, alluvial sections with riparian vegetation were also noted. Dinkey Creek is a popular trout fishing destination.

Need for additional (engineering/hydrological, or other) information on measures

Need information on range of seasonal flow conditions in Dinkey Creek.

Need information on exact area that would be submerged by a dam on Dinkey Creek.

Need the following estimates for proposed reservoir:

- Mean depth for each month, April – October.
- Mean surface area of shallow water habitat (less than 15 feet deep) in each month, April – October.
- Mean rate of water level fluctuation for each month, April – October.

Additional data needs (within each specific discipline)

Need information on summer water temperatures in Dinkey Creek and list of fish species likely to be present in the creek. Also, any existing water quality information and information on the location and types of active and abandoned mines in the inundation zone of the proposed reservoir.

| Field Trip Log - Recreation | | |
|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Trip Log Number: | S9 | Project No.: 8004094 |
| Dates: | May 29, 2002 | |
| Site Name: | Dinkey Creek Dam | |
| Location: | Dinkey Creek, tributary to the Kings River | |
| Prepared By: | Sandra Perry | |
| Date: | June 3, 2002 | |

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Weather Conditions: | Hot and dry |
| Areas Covered (attach map with notations) | Dinkey Creek and vicinity |
| Attachments | |
| Photo Log | No |
| Photos | No |
| Topographic Map(s) | Yes |

Field Observations:

Existing Facilities:

This project would involve constructing a new dam on Dinkey Creek, which is a tributary to the North Fork of the Kings River. The new dam site and reservoir would be situated mainly on public lands managed by the Sierra National Forest. This area is a popular recreation destination and includes numerous developed recreation facilities as described below. The area also includes a heliport, a ranger station, a sawmill, and paved and unpaved roads. The town of Dinkey Creek is located just upstream.

Existing Environmental Features as Appropriate to Discipline (hydrology; aquatic-water quality; terrestrial—plants; wildlife; recreation; cultural resources; land use; aesthetic)

This area is a major recreation destination and includes numerous developed recreation facilities including three recreation camps (Camp Fresno, Camp Mary-Y-Mac, Camp El-O-Win), numerous recreation residences, developed campgrounds and picnic areas, and trails and trailheads. The area provides a variety of recreation opportunities including, hiking, picnicking, horseback riding, and camping. Dinkey Creek is a popular fishing destination.

Need for additional (engineering/hydrological, or other) information on measures

Need information on exact area that would be submerged by a dam on Dinkey Creek.
Need information on how Dinkey Reservoir would be operated.

Additional data needs (within each specific discipline)

Need information on the recreation residences in the area including the number of residences, type of residence (eg. Forest Service lease or private), season of use and use estimates.

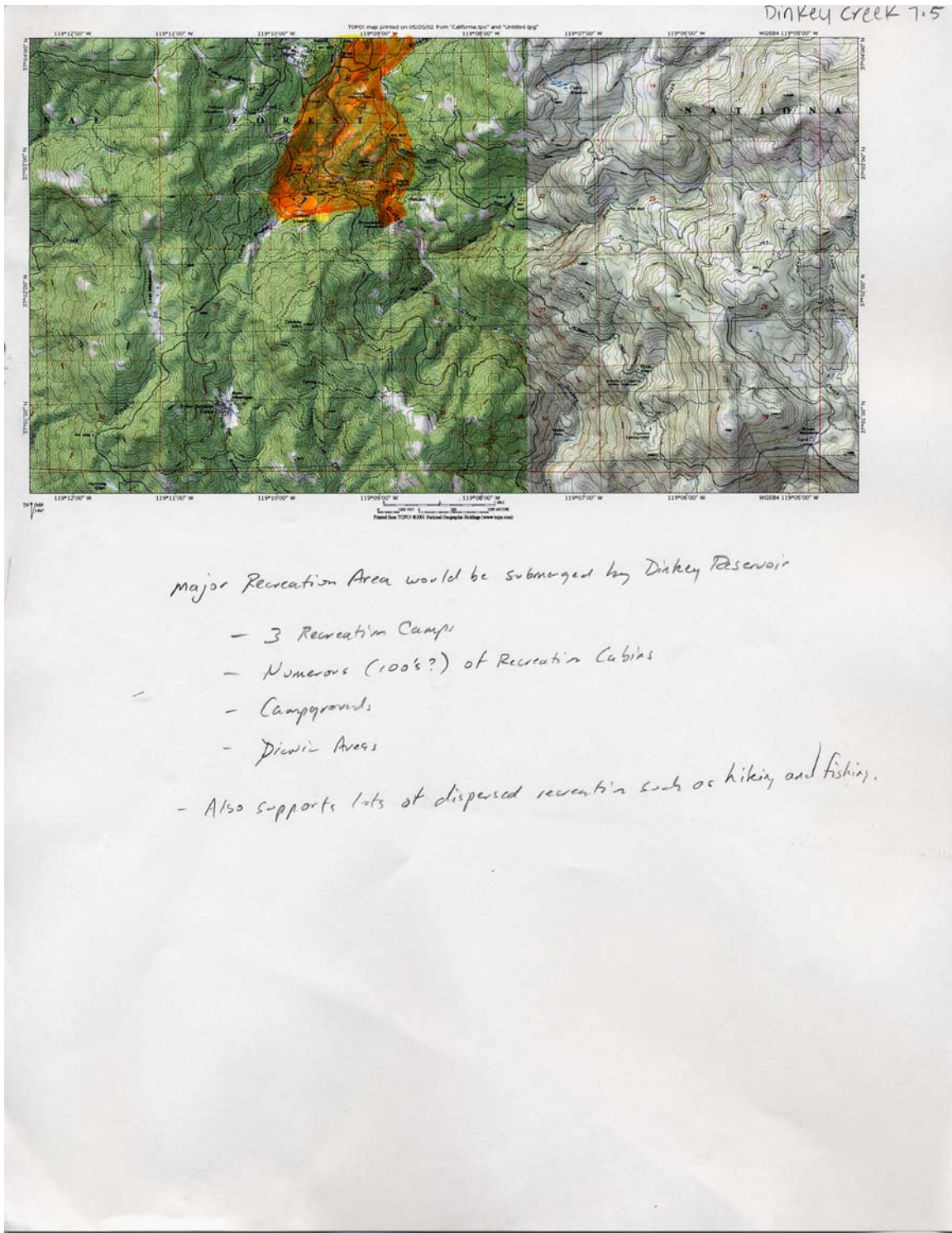
Need information on the three recreation camps in the area, including estimates on annual visitation and season of use.

Need information on the developed campgrounds and picnic areas in the area, including use estimates and season of use.

Need to describe how the area is used for dispersed recreation and estimate use by activity along Dinkey Creek and surrounding area.

Need to determine status of potential nearby Wilderness Area (Marble Point)

Need to determine how roads in the area are used to access other recreation areas in the Forest



| Field Trip Log – Land Use | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------|
| Trip Log Number: | S9 | Project No.: 8004094 |
| Dates: | May 29, 2002 | |
| Site Name: | Dinkey Creek Dam | |
| Location: | Dinkey Creek, tributary to the Kings River | |
| Prepared By: | Irina Torrey | |
| Date: | June 12, 2002 | |
| Weather Conditions: | Hot and dry | |
| Areas Covered (attach map with notations) | Dinkey Creek and vicinity | |
| Attachments | | |
| Photo Log | Yes | |
| Photos | Yes | |
| Topographic Map(s) | No | |

Field Observations:

Existing Facilities:

This project would involve constructing a new dam on Dinkey Creek, which is a tributary to the North Fork of the Kings River. The new dam site and reservoir would be situated mainly on public lands managed by the Sierra National Forest. This area is a popular recreation destination and includes numerous developed recreation facilities as described below. The area also includes a heliport, a ranger station, a sawmill, and paved and unpaved roads. The town of Dinkey Creek is located upstream.

Existing Environmental Features as Appropriate to Discipline (hydrology; aquatic-water quality; terrestrial—plants; wildlife; recreation; cultural resources; land use; aesthetic)

This area is a major recreation destination and includes numerous recreation residences (ranchettes). Private residences and roads may be located in areas of inundation.

Need for additional (engineering/hydrological, or other) information on measures

Need information on exact area that would be submerged by a dam on Dinkey Creek.

Additional data needs (within each specific discipline)

Need information on residences in the area including the number of residences, type of residence (eg., Forest Service lease or private), season of use and use estimates.
Need to determine how roads in the area are used and how they would be affected by development of the reservoir.

Field Trip Log – Cultural Resources

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|-------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Trip Log Number: | S9 | Project No.: 8004094 |
| Dates: | May 29, 2002 | |
| Site Name: | Dinkey Creek Dam | |
| Location: | Dinkey Creek, tributary to the Kings River | |
| Prepared By: | David White | |
| Date: | May 29 2002 | |

| | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Weather Conditions: | Hot & dry |
| Areas Covered (attach map with notations) | Aerial reconnaissance May 29. |
| Attachments | |
| Photo Log | Yes – MWH 0205 |
| Photos | Yes – nos. 23-25 |
| Topographic Map(s) | Dinkey Creek quad |

Field Observations:

Existing Facilities:

No existing dam; there are recreational facilities in Dinkey Creek drainage.

Existing Environmental Features as Appropriate to Discipline (hydrology; aquatic-water quality; terrestrial—plants; wildlife; recreation; cultural resources; land use; aesthetic)

Cultural resources:

Prehistoric: coniferous forest zone. Moderate probability of prehistoric archaeological sites including hunting & fishing camps.

Historic: Various sites likely, associated with mining, logging, recreation and other activities.

Need for additional (engineering/hydrological, or other) information on measures

Need precisely mapped footprint of reservoir, with various potential dam levels; also need footprint of all associated project-related ground disturbance areas, to include but not be limited to project offices and maintenance buildings, construction set-up and lay-down areas, access roads, electric transmission lines, water conveyance structures, and all other project facilities.

Additional data needs (within each specific discipline)

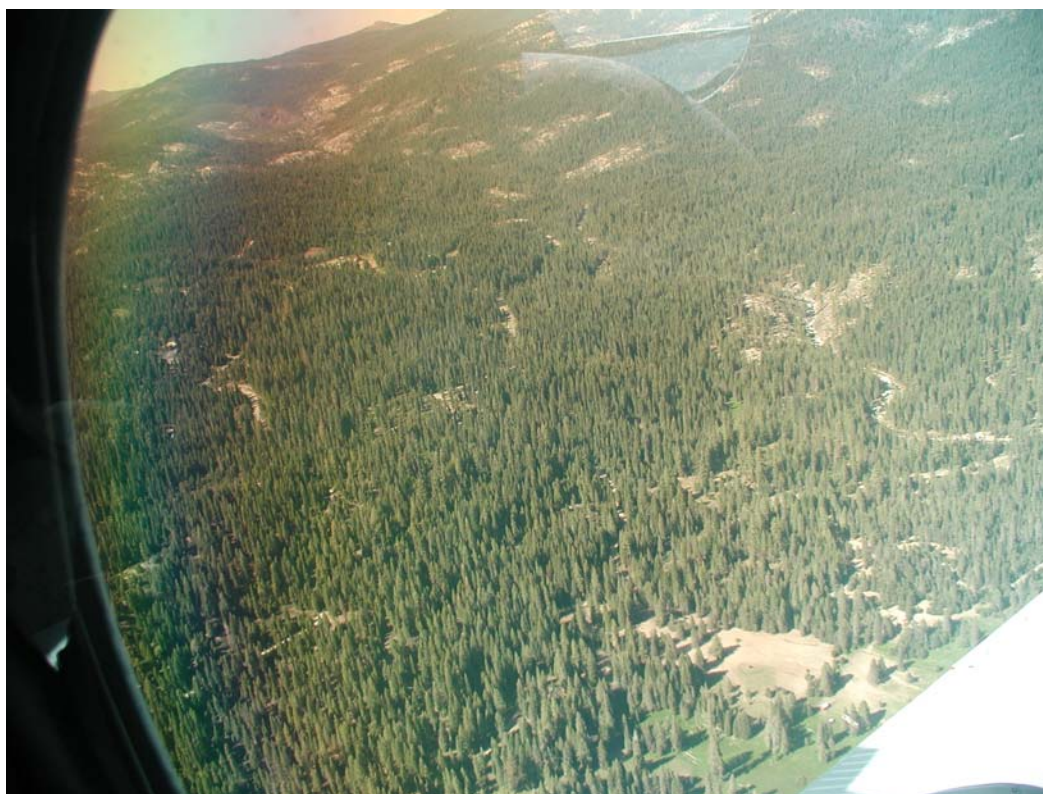
Need archaeological records search with California Historic Resources Inventory System (CHRIS) information center. Clearinghouse: Southern San Joaquin Valley Info Center, CSU-Bakersfield.

Need consultation with USFS cultural resource specialists (Sierra National Forest) regarding sites that may not be recorded with the CHRIS information center.

Also need brief review of archaeological and ethnographic literature pertaining to the area. Minimal level of effort: (1) to identify types of archaeological remains expected, time periods represented; and (2) to identify Native American tribes historically occupying the area, along with published information on major named villages or other ethnographic sites.



Picture: P5290034 Dinkey Creek area, May 29 2002, afternoon



Picture: P5290035 Dinkey Creek area, May 29 2002, afternoon



Picture: P5290036 Dinkey Creek area, May 29 2002, afternoon



Confluence of Dinkey Creek (upper left corner of photo) and North Fork Kings River AND confluence mainstem Kings River (left to right in photo) and North Fork Kings R.

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